THE TOWN.

NUMBER II.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1807.

Parve . . . . . sine me, liber, ibis in URBEM:
(Hei mihi!) quo domino non licet ire tuo.
Vade.— OVID.

For the Town.

AND WEEP THEIR FALSHOOD THO' SHE LOVE THEM STILL.
CAMPBELL.

Yes! ye were dear, ye lovely dreams,
By Fancy's sportive pencil drawn,
Tho' faded now your radiance seems,
And ev'ry glowing tint withdrawn!

Tho', taught by Time's slow-moving hand,
No more to trust their gaudy hue,
O'er each fair vision, bright and bland,
Experience sighs a sad adieu—

Yet Mem'ry, fondly turning, weeps
The dreams she lov'd, so false, so fair,
And, on her choicest tablet, keeps
The treasur'd pictures, drawn in air.

Yes, ye were dear, gay dreams of buoyant youth!
Tho' distant far—alas, how far! from truth!
CLARA.

THE THEATRE.

We are suspected of purblindness, in not having discovered Mr. Holland's *grand gothic scene*, which, as we are informed, was actually exhibited, and consisted in that which ought to be a gallery in *Macbeth's* castle, leading to the chamber of *Duncan*. We can only say, that, as we saw no *grand* gothic scene, so we did not imagine that we saw the grand gothic scene of Mr. *Holland*. We shall, hereafter, offer some further remarks upon this *grand* gothic scene. In the interim, we may be allowed to advert to a particular which was one foundation of our mistake. The scene of the outside of Macbeth's castle was supplied by one of the iron gates of a tolerably modern mansion, or what might serve for a park-entrance. As there was nothing *gothic* here, we actually believed, in the simpleness of our hearts, that the grand gothic scene had been intended for this place.

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It escaped us, in our last, to take a slight notice of Mr. Chambers, as a singer. On Monday evening, he sung *Black Eyed Susan*, between the play and farce. The selection was an unfortunate one: we have been told, however, that it was not his choice, but that it was forced upon him by some green-room management, in the absence of Mr. Cooper, and for the express purpose of exhibiting him to a disadvantage; there being a gentleman, in the company, who supposes he can sing it so much better, that poor Chambers must of course suffer by the comparison. How this was, we cannot undertake to assert, nor whether the gentleman alluded to can sing it better than Mr. Chambers, never having had the pleasure of hearing him. We very much suspect, however, that he would just as little bear the comparison, which he, who has had the opportunity to do so, must always make between any singer of this charming song and Incledon; whose best it is, with the single exception of the *Storm*, and who, it is well known, always executes it in such a style of decided superiority, as renders it presumption for any other man to attempt it. On Wednesday evening, Mr. Chambers sung a less objectionable songs. In both he displayed the same extent and sweetness of voice, particularly in *alt*; betrayed the same uncultivated taste, exposed the same total ignorance of musical science, and exhibited the same uncouth gestures and constrained attitudes. With the assistance of good masters, and much assiduity and perseverance on his part, Mr. C. might hope in time to arrive at a very considerable eminence as a singer; without this, his ambition ought to be confined to very narrow limits.

The afterpiece of Wednesday evening, *Love Laughs at Locksmiths*, is a very agreeable farce, in which Mr. Harwood appears to great advantage. Even Mr. Shapter makes a figure in it.

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Friday Evening, January 2.

George Barnwell, a tragedy of established reputation, was followed by the musical drama of *Blue-Beard*.

A Mr. Rutherford, from the Philadelphia theatre, made his first appearance on this stage. This gentleman's person is much in the way of his theatrical success; and, indeed, when, one after the other, so many individuals present themselves on the boards, all below *hero-measure*, we cannot but lament it deeply, that no expedient can be thought of, for adding to their inches. Such of our readers as remember the late Luzerne miracle, or the wonderful effect of a supper of plaster-of-Paris, upon a farmer's children, will no doubt join with us, in recommending the experiment to some half dozen of Mr. Cooper's

company. If this should fail, we confess that our last hope will be gone.

Neither Mr. Rutherford's person, nor his powers, are sufficient for giving its full interest to *George Barnwell*. This is a play which can have little, besides good acting, for its support: The story is always probable, and this is much in its favour. In other respects, its morality is scarcely aided by the usual recommendations of the stage. It languishes, therefore, in action, unless the performers engaged in it possess adequate powers.

When an actor is neither by nature nor by art a fool, adverse criticism is a painful duty. Arrogant pretensions, affectation, and over-weening conceit, may be justly exposed, and even ignorance and bad habits usefully detected; but, when, without any of these, an actor's misfortune consists in the mediocrity of natural gifts, the critic reluctantly proceeds. He must reflect, however, that when any person places himself in a public situation, he gives himself up to public opinion; that those who become candidates for praise ought to be prepared to receive censure; that the feelings of individuals must be sacrificed, when the improvement of the actor is in question; and that, if the stage, or any other pursuit, be undertaken by one that is not qualified for it, he who goads him, even till he quit the path, is not, after all, his enemy.

In a word, if Mr. Rutherford be content with any moderate share of praise, we are not disposed to refuse it.—His *George Barnewell* was feeble, but not offensive. It was a tolerably faithful shadow of what it ought to be. It was free from rant, but it wanted vigour.

His scene, in the second act, with *Trueman*, was extremely heavy; but this might be chiefly owing to Mr. Martin.

Mr. Shapter made *Thorowgood* a most solemn fool. It is a great pity that he had not the pleasure of drawling over Mr. Tyler's nonsensical speech, concerning presentiments. Every now and then, we had the gratification of hearing Mrs. Simpson articulate her words. If she could do so, through the whole of her part, it might be somewhat of an improvement.

Mrs. Villiers has great merit in *Milwood*. Both this lady and Mrs. Darley have the good quality of speaking with distinctness: it is to be wished that their voices were better, and of greater compass. In Mrs. Villiers' final speech, there was much excellence, on the score of declamation; that is, it was fluently and gracefully delivered; but the expression was not always suited to the word.—The author himself has indeed committed a very unpardonable blunder. He has diverted our attention from the single sentiment which he should have aimed to inculcate. The story of *George Barnwell*, besides displaying the *particular* calamities attendant on *his* connection with a woman like as *Milwood*, ought, and was in fact designed, to leave a *general* feeling abhorrence of such women Without this, however afflicting the incidents set forth, no precept of universal use is taught.—But the author is not content with this. Besides teaching us the dangers to which young men are liable, from depraved characters of the other sex, he is desirous of teaching too, that it is often by men that women are rendered depraved. The second truth is as undeniable as the first; but, by its introduction here, our sentiments upon *Milwood* are divided. She is made an object of compassion, when we ought only to hate her.

But, as to what belongs to the actor, Mrs. Villiers should have considered, in many of the sentiments put into her mouth, that they are the sentiments of a bad heart; of one at least embittered by ill usage, and perverted in its conceptions. How could she deliver, with the voice of candour and persuasion, such a sentiment as this, *That the judge himself would have been a thief, had he been poor?* This can be the doctrine only of a base mind, which, looking through its own medium, sees nothing any where but baseness. There are other sentiments in this speech, concerning the punishment of crimes, which strike at the whole fabric of social order, and which should be uttered only in the spirit of a *Macheath*, or of the great hero of Paradise Lost, the outcast *Satan*.

The drama of *Blue-Beard* was well played. It has some excellent scenery. The lights at the top of the stage have a singularly good effect. The entrance of the blue chamber is very elegant; but, why pictures of ladies, or any other living thing, in the house of a Mussulman? There ought to be only flowers. Mesdames Oldmixon and Darley have splendid dresses, much to our taste. We wish Mrs. Oldmixon's hung better upon her. The three-tailed bashaw would do better to threaten his slave with his scymitar, than to come, at every instant, to fisty-cuffs.

On Monday Evening, January 5,

MACBETH,

AND

THE AGREEABLE SURPRISE.

LONDON FEMALE FASHIONS,

FOR NOVEMBER.

General Observations. The most prevailing colours are pink, purple and fawn. Pelisses are not yet general; but what are worn are made of cloth or kerseymere, hanging loose behind from the shoulders. Scarf-shawls are very fashionable, and are now fabricated to such perfection and elegance in England, as nearly to rival those of Indian manufacture.

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One day Mr. Incledon having a part to study in a new opera, was reading away, *not very fluently*, in the Green-room: says Mrs. Mountain, *I see these Sunday schools won't answer.*"

Talking on the subject of *metemsychosis*, a certain silly young nobleman observed, that he remembered having been the golden calf.—'Very likely,' replied the late Duches of Devonshire, 'and you have lost nothing *but the gilding.*'

Mr. Opie, taking the portrait of a lady, perceived that when he was working at the mouth, she was twisting her features in order to render it smaller, and put her lips into the most violent contraction; impatient at such artifice, he, at length, said to her, 'Don't hurt yourself, madam, in trying to make your mouth smaller, because, if you choose, I will put none at all.'

Charles Bannister, going into a shop with Parsons, the latter was curious in examining an *electrical eel*, and asked Bannister what sort of a pye he thought it would make. The other replied, '*A shocking one.*'

Wewitzer, the comedian, having lent one of his comrades a small matter, spoke to him one night behind the scenes in Drury-lane Theatre. 'By G—, Tom, those two guineas I lent you ought to be paid me; you know I am in great distress, for we can get nothing from the Treasury.' 'Do not talk to me about it,' said the other, 'by heavens, within this week I will take care to pay you, *in some shape or other.*" 'You will oblige me,' replied the creditor, 'and pray let it be as much *in the shape of two guineas as possible.*'

MY SCISSORS.

BY SIMON SECTOR.

De alieno corio ludit.

To be what we seem is a principle the value of which is recognized by all the world; and which, however little men may reduce it to practise for themselves, they uniformly cherish in others. At the very recollection of the idea, every thing, that is estimable in morals, starts immediately into view; nay, so strong is its hold on our affections, that even wrong itself almost imposes itself on us for right, when it disdains a mask, and appears frankly and undisguised.

It is upon the strength of these reflections that I have not scrupled to give the title, of My Scissors, to this paper of mine, which, by favour of the Town, I now publish, and propose to continue. While so many Editors, said I, employ the Scissors rather than the pen, and flourish upon the tottering basis of fraud, will the Town be less kind to one, who, treading only in their steps, confesses, at the same time, the real nature of his resources? I resolved on the appeal.

My reader is now forewarned; and let him remember,

that this, as it is the first, so it will be the last warning that I shall give him. I shall henceforward, like my neighbours, use My Scissors, and, whenever I choose, say nothing. Poetry and prose, all will come alike; I shall make incisions of all sizes; wide gashes and modest snips, following all examples,

From slashing Bentley, down to piddling Tibald.

Thus far, I have hurled defiance, convinced that I have nothing substantial to hope for, unless from the stern virtues of honesty and courage. I have left blandishments to those who may justly aim to heighten the charms of merit by sweetness; and to those who dare to profane beauty, in making it the companion of what is base. But, blandishments I might fairly employ, and endeavour to defend by argument, what I do by open force.

For, losing sight of all that I have said, or might have said, of my fellow labourers and their Scissors, might I not have been content to rest my apology on what, no doubt, would be that of the whole tribe, if others, like myself, should ever be bold enough to make one? Need I hesitate at *cutting up* books, when we see so many thousands *cut up* by the critics? and where is the writer that would not rather be *cut up* by me, who *cut out* his beauties, than by him, who, whatever be the sharp instrument he use, lays open his deformities, and lays bare his nerves?

And, by the way, we beauty-cutters, (monsters and women-haters God forbid!) may boast a sentiment so amiable, that we can never want excuse, in an age disposed even to prefer amiableness to virtue. Ours are what a French writer calls *amorous larcenies*, a sort of loving thefts and tender filchings. Our eyes and ears are charmed; and, with the true furtiveness of amateurs, we carry away the objects of our delight, and place them in our collection; not ambitious to have them thought productions of our own art, but satisfied with the approbation of our taste, or even the secret indulgence of our admiration.—Thus much for beauty-stealing in general; but, with what zest the Scissors are to be used on such occasions, every one will feel, who remembers the loving little Juliet:

Come night!—come Romeo! come thou day in night!
For thou wilt be, upon the wings of night,
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.—
Come, gentle night; come loving black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo; and, when he dies,
Take him, and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heav'n so fine,
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.

That the use of the Scissors is therefore a very pretty occupation, I hope I need no further contend; but, question it he that will, I feel the full extent of its truth, in the first cut and fruit of mine—the production of a pen to which I see that the Town is already under obligations, and in which genius and sensibility display themselves, on an occasion the most interesting and worthy.

THE DREAM.

Vision of bliss! yet stay, ah stay!
Why on swift wing flitt'st thou away?
Why to my throbbing heart restore
The cherub-form I still adore;
Then, envious, from my eager sight,
Shroud it in shades of deepest night!
'Twas but a dream—be still my heart!—
Caus'd by distemper'd Fancy's art;
Who, fondly turning to the past,
Wrought the dear cheat too fair to last!

Swifter than thought it glides away!
Delusive bliss, one moment stay!
Dream of delight, yet once again,
Return and sooth regret's fond pain!
Restore again that laughing eye,
Ting'd with heav'n's cerulean dye;
That bloomy cheek, so soft and fair,
Elysium's sweets seem treasur'd there;
Of auburn hair, the wavy shade.
Which o'er his snowy forehead play'd;
The scarlet lip, th' endearing will,
The polish'd form, th' enchanting smile;
All that a mother's heart could charm,
Or, with fond pride, her bosom warm!
Soft power of sleep! thy lethean dews
O'er every willing sense effuse;
The substance lost, oh, give the shade;
Let no rude noise again invade!
Fair as in life my arms he blest,
Bring the bright vision to my rest;
Since dreams are all I dare to hope,
Oh give the dear illusion scope!
Again the fancied bliss restore;
Benignant power, I ask no more! CLARA.

—

ODE.

Who, with her arms of love, carest,
And laid me, youngling, on her breast,
And hush'd me there to downy rest?
My mother.

Who, o'er my infant-ailings wept,
And, by my bed, long vigils kept,
And kiss'd and bless'd me while I slept?
My mother.

Who, in each frolic-sport, and toy,
With glist'ning eye, indulg'd my joy,
And shar'd the transports of her boy?
My mother.

Who, patient of a wayward child,
Forgave my headstrong humours wild,
And soon the frown forgot, and smil'd?
My mother.

Who, guardian, champion, counsel, friend,
To schoolday-cares her aid would lend,
My tears would dry, my cause defend?
My mother.

Who to brave truth and honour bred
My heart, and in their high-road led,
And bade me there forever tread?
My mother.

Who nurs'd me in the proud disdain
Of all that scoundrel's feel, or feign,
And all that scoundrels boast, or gain?
My mother.

Who, by her fair example, taught
Each holy aim, and gen'rous thought,
And virtues never to be bought?
My mother.

Who, to this filial bosom dear,
Through onward life's maturer year,
Is cherish'd, lov'd and worshipp'd here?
My mother.
LÆTUS.

Published by J. OSBORN, No. 13 Park—Printed by D. & G. BRUCE.—Price SIXPENCE.